



## Gardening Tips For December

- ❖ As you decorate for Christmas, look in your back yard for natural accents — pinecones, holly, berries, etc.
- ❖ Display poinsettias away from heat sources or cold drafts. Keep soil moist, but not soggy. Poinsettias that dry out droop and drop their flowers.
- ❖ Use calcium chloride instead of sodium chloride on your icy walkways. It does less damage to your plants. Sand is even better.
- ❖ Sprinkle wood ash onto slippery walkways to help melt ice.
- ❖ Feed the birds.
- ❖ Plan your spring garden.
- ❖ Recycle live Christmas trees.
- ❖ Repot any indoor plants that are root bound.
- ❖ Remove aphids from houseplants with a mixture of equal parts rubbing alcohol and water and add a drop of dishwashing detergent. Apply this to troubled plants with a soft brush.
- ❖ Gently shake or brush off snow-weighted branches that have no support.
- ❖ Tuck amaryllis bulbs in pots for blooms a few weeks later. Leave the bulb shoulders protruding above soil; planting too deeply can rot the bulb. Water when soil is dry.
- ❖ Continue to water newly planted trees and shrubs.
- ❖ Gather and dispose of any remaining fruits or nuts on trees or the ground beneath them. This reduces pests and diseases next year.
- ❖ Mound dirt around the base of rose bushes to protect them from the cold.
- ❖ Don't prune spring flowering shrubs now.
- ❖ Clean and store decorative planters and fragile statuary.
- ❖ Clean leaves and debris from water gardens.
- ❖ Cyclamens thrive in cool temperatures (50-60 degrees F). Place them in a spot where temps tumble overnight. Display them in a warmer spot during daylight hours — in a location where you can enjoy the pretty blooms. Keep soil moist.

